

## Message Text

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51

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 EB-04 AGR-05 SWF-01 CIAE-00

INR-05 NSAE-00 RSC-01 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 SAB-01

/058 W

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R 181716Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2328

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

C O N F I D E N T I A L PANAMA 6614

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PN

SUBJ: INCREASED GOP INVOLVEMENT IN CENTRAL AMERICA

REF: STATE 250369

1. IN RESPONSE TO REFTEL, OUR ASSESSMENT IS THAT GOP REMAINS UNINTERESTED IN BECOMING FORMAL PART OF THE STRUCTURE OF CENTRAL AMERICA INTEGRATION. PANAMA HAS OPENED ITS DOORS TO THE WEST AND EAST AND VIES TO BECOME LATIN AMERICA'S LEADING TRADE AND BANKING CENTER. WHILE PANAMANIAN INTERNAL MARKET IS AS LARGE OR LARGER THAN THE FIVE CENTRAL AMERICAN COUNTRIES, THE GOP HAS BILATERAL COMMERCIAL ARRANGEMENTS WITH MOST CENTRAL AMERICAN COUNTRIES AND THERE WOULD BE LITTLE ADVANTAGE TO PANAMA IN RESTRICTING ITS NOW OPEN ECONOMY BY JOINING A REGIONAL GROUP.

2. WE ALSO BELIEVE GOP--AND WE MEAN GENERAL TORRIJOS-ASPIRES PANAMANIAN LEADERSHIP OF CENTRAL AMERICAN STATES AND EVENTUALLY BE RECOGNIZED PROMINENT NON-ALIGNED LATIN AMERICAN FIGURE. MOST RECENT INDICATIONS OF THIS TREND WERE VISITS TO PANAMA OF HONDURAN AND COSTA RICAN PRESIDENTS - AT TORRIJOS INVITATION AND DECISION  
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THAT THE UNION OF BANANA EXPORTING COUNTRIES (HONDURAS, COSTA

RICA, GUATEMALA, COLOMBIA AND PANAMA) WILL BE HEADQUARTERED IN PANAMA CITY.

3. IN SUM, IT IS OUR VIEW THAT INCREASED TEMPO OF PANANPNIAN INTERACTION WITH CENTRAL AMERICANS IS A REFLECTION OF GOP'S DESIRE FOR REGIONAL LEADERSHIP, NOT A PRELUDE TO FORMAL ASSOCIATION WITH CENTRAL AMERICAN INTEGRATION.  
GONZALEZ

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** ECONOMIC INTEGRATION  
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**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** CollinP0  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
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**Reference:** STATE 250369  
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**Review Authority:** CollinP0  
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**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 10 SEP 2002  
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**Subject:** INCREASED GOP INVOLVEMENT IN CENTRAL AMERICA  
**TAGS:** EFIN, PN, XK  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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